Mental Health Awareness Month 2022: Xbox Ambassadors Share their Stories

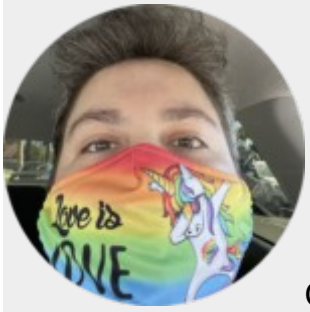
Community Fifthpaw May 23, 2022

Hey, everyone! At the beginning of the month, we celebrated the start of Asian & Pacific Islander Heritage Month and we definitely recommend checking out the wonderful stories in that blog.

However, May also happens to be Mental Health Awareness Month. A while back we asked a question on the Xbox Ambassadors forum: ***What video game(s) help your mental wellness?***

Here's what some of you had to say:

Spoodly Phoenix



Oh, I could go on and on with this one. To be honest, it really depends on how I'm feeling, or what I need mentally. If I need something wholesome and heartwarming, I may hang out in *Tell Me Why* or *Spiritfarer*. Those games are so beautifully made, with amazing stories that touch real-world things. Beyond that, such amazing gameplay and music! If I want something to take out some frustration, probably some kind of shooter

or fighting game. I can choose to imagine I'm destroying whatever is bothering me, giving a huge amount of stress relief.

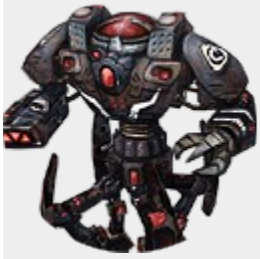
If I want epic scenery, I might pop into an *Assassin's Creed* game. Running through ancient Greece, or traveling with the old Nords, I know that I'll have an epic adventure! All in all, video games allow me a great escape from the stresses and troubles of the real world and is a great social activity!

GoldenDjinn

This may be an odd choice, but I found *Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy* to be unexpectedly heartfelt, with its themes about family (both the one you're born into and the ones you choose) and dealing with the grief that comes after the death of a loved one. It made me emotional in a way any game hadn't in quite some time. On top of that I enjoyed the camaraderie and rapport between Peter Quill (Starlord) and the other Guardians.

The game itself is also a lot of fun and full to the brim with humorous and light-hearted moments that make you appreciate its ability to be both silly and sincere. By the time I had finished it I had fallen in love with these characters and the universe they inhabit and was left desperately wanting more.

Redeemer115



2019 was the hardest year of my life. I suffered a complete mental break down; I am still healing from the events that happened in that devastating year. Somehow, I managed to pull through, what a strange mystery. There were three games that helped me when things were at its most intense.

The first game that helped me in this troubled time was *Command & Conquer 3*. I have been a fan of *Command & Conquer* ever since *Tiberium*

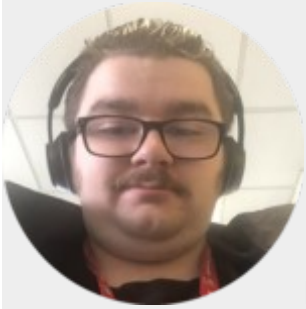
Wars came to Xbox. Out of all the Strategy game franchises, C&C has been the most influential. When things were getting bad and I was unable to handle the chaotic circumstances, C&C 3 helped me gain control in at least one thing. From there, I was able to wind down and get a grasp on other small things.

The second game that helped me was *Skyrim*. I would use a few mods on the Xbox version (Cheat Room, Alternate Start, etc). Here I would just live a more humble life, not progressing any major questlines. I would spend hours walking between the cities and villages of Skyrim. The hold of Falkreath was always so calming; exploring and appreciating the details of the game is something I still do to this day, especially when it is a cooler day.

The third game that helped me was *Dark Souls*. I had never played this genre of game before. I knew nothing about gameplay or story. It was a welcome challenge, it really taught me to focus and be purposeful in combat, unlike most of medieval/ fantasy game which is to just button mash in combat. However, it was the story or the lack of it that really stuck deep within me. I was able to fill in the blanks and draw parallels in what was happening to me IRL. This game help me deal with my mental health in a level I never really thought possible.

To those who are falling down into the depths below, just know that games can help as much as people and don't you dare go hollow.

Chompazard



I'd say there are two main games that have helped me with my mental well-being throughout my time on Xbox.

The first is *Celeste* as it allowed me to slowly understand my mental health at a greater level through the gradual decline in mental state Madeline (the protagonist) experiences and how she learns to deal with it through friendship (*that* feather scene is just mwahh).

The second game would be *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege*. I'm aware this may present me as a crazy person, but the game helps me to channel my anger into something constructive and has helped me develop my mental confidence to talk to strangers (I suffer from traits of Asperger's Syndrome).

BigCookie405

Well, not that it “helped” my mental health, but *Sea of Solitude* certainly helped me to understand the extremities of mental illness, especially as it concerns my loved ones and students I work with on a daily/weekly basis. If you do suffer from these illnesses, use caution if you choose to play.

The game’s content is very heavy but has redemptive qualities as you learn how the main character tends to her personal struggles, as well as how to interact with those around you who also struggle with those illnesses.

Semoclive

I play a lot of *Phantasy Star Online 2: New Genesis* to be able to hang out with online friends and socialize more, and it lets me unleash a bit of my bottled-up creativity by designing cool character concepts using the robust customization systems. When I need to kick back and relax, I can play a lot of different things, like *Stardew Valley, Minecraft, Stellaris* or *No Man’s Sky*.

The hours just fade away when I get into the groove and it helps you forget about some of the hardships you experienced through the course of a normal day.

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Thank you to all Ambassadors for sharing their stories. We would also like to remind everyone about the available helpful resources relating to mental health and wellness provided by *Take This*, an organization whose mission is to decrease the stigma of mental health and provide support in the gaming

community. A link to these resources can also be found in the Xbox Ambassadors Discord server.

Disclaimer: *This list is provided as a courtesy resource only, we do not endorse these groups, nor can we vouch for the level of service or outcomes individuals may have when contacting them.*

Please note that these links are intended to help community members reach expert resources and related materials for their own use. We do not recommend that Ambassadors should take it upon themselves to act in roles that should be reserved for mental health experts.

Crisis Lines

Therapist Directories

Online Therapy Resources

Culturally-Specific Therapeutic Support (US)

Self-Care Tools

Streaming Resources

Online Harassment Support

Apps and Other Tools